INFORMATION

AGENDA ITEM: Statewide Information Databases – California Digital Library's Government Information Initiative

GENERAL OVERALL PROGRAM UPDATES:

CURRENT STATUS: The California State Library (CSL) and the University of California's California Digital Library (CDL) have signed an interagency agreement whereby CSL agrees to fund and CDL agrees to facilitate the California Counts database. This is the first phase of CDL's Government Information Initiative, a proposal to develop a feasible way of acquiring and providing continuous and persistent access to government information available through California state agency Web sites, and to make this access available continuously to all Californians.

Web Design

The California Digital Library has contracted with Birdsall Interactive, an Oakland-based web design group. Birdsall will work with the CDL to create the following:

1. Create a logo and brand identity that is simple enough to be used in a variety of contexts in both print and digital form. Although identification with UC and the California Digital Library is important to indicate the University's contribution to the larger environment, such identification does not need to be an integral part of the logo or brand identity (for example, integrating the CDL logo somewhere on the web page will be sufficient).
2. A graphical architecture that easily accommodates "co-branding" with the Library of California.
3. An opening page screen design.
4. A standard design for subsequent pages and/or co-branded sites that integrates key navigational features.
5. A distinct typography and style that can be adjusted and replicated by us to maintain the design over time.

Timeline for Prototype

Beginning in November the California Counts project team will consult with a small/select group (campus representatives, CDL staff, Library of California staff, Government Information Advisory Group, UC data archivists, etc) to test and evaluate the system. During this time CA Counts will also move from a test/development environment to a production environment – this will require approximately a month to complete. On release day structured testing and evaluation will begin. The California Counts project team will continue testing the system internally until release day --January 19, 2000. During the structured testing period access to CA Counts will be controlled –

it will not be linked to any public pages, the CDL Directory, etc., but will available via the CDL library staff pages.

Access, Functionality, and Support for California Counts Prototype

The California Counts prototype will carry disclaimers stating that the system is in test. Once in the structured testing phase, the major bugs will be worked out of the system and major functions of the system will be useable. Support and availability will not be 24x7; however, the system will not be intentionally brought down for maintenance mid-day. No training or instructional support will be supplied since the prototype will be subject to change.

Usability Studies and Focus Groups

The California Counts project team will work with John Ober (Director of CDL Education and Strategic Innovation) to assess if users are successfully able to access and retrieve information from the California Counts system. The intention is to evaluate a broad range of users with varying degrees of familiarity with numeric data. The California Counts project team will look to the Library of California for help in identifying users.

RELATED ISSUE TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE: Update on the California Counts database.

Relevant Committee: Support Services
Staff Liaison: Tom Andersen

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